

**DESIGNS TO FILL
GIVEN SPACES**

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4
LESSON SEVEN

In decorating any object with a design of your own conception, a problem will confront you which I now wish to discuss: I mean the laying out of a design to fill a given space. You will remember that I discussed this very briefly in connection with the bread board in a preceding lesson.

There are five figures or shapes that will concern us mostly; the square, the rectangle, the triangle, the circle, and the half

Before deciding upon the scheme of the design to be adopted it is always well to make a few trial sketches in pencil. If birds or animals are introduced, and if the student is not advanced enough in drawing from life, he should seek books on "animal studies" at the local library. These will be of great assistance. The student who is fortunate enough to live in a large city will find in the museum of natural history a wealth of suggestions that will be useful in decorative work.

But of all sources from which to gain

It was said of Raphael: "He owed more to his industry than to his genius."

circle. These may be applied to almost any surface you may wish to decorate.

There are, of course, a great many other shapes used, but the ones I have mentioned in the last paragraph will be sufficient this time. If you train your eye in this work, you will come to understand the requirements of any surface that presents itself to you for decoration, and when your taste is formed you will be able to decide at a glance on the proper geometrical figure to use in any instance.

"The barriers are not yet erected which shall say to aspiring talent, 'Thus far and no farther'."—Beethoven.

practical ideas for designs, the study of plant form as you find it around you everywhere is the most practical as well as the most accessible to you. It furnishes the decorator not only with forms and shapes that may be adapted to general designs, but also with designs that enjoy a universal popularity.

Accompanying this lesson is a plate "Designs to fill given spaces." Here you will find a number of designs adapted to the five geometrical figures I mentioned in the first part of this lesson.

*"Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate,
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait."*

The Sketch Book

I have just pointed out to you the importance of studying nature as it reveals itself to you from day to day. Now, in order to take advantage of what you learn from observation, the sketch book should always be in your pocket. It need not be cumbersome. My experience proves that a book which can be slipped easily into the pocket

is much better and contains all the space you will need for notes and sketches.

Carry your sketch book with you wherever you go and sketch plant form and animal form whenever opportunity offers. File these sketches for future reference. You

cannot depend on your memory to give you the details of a plant, leaf, or flower some weeks after you have observed it. Make a record of it so that you can turn back to it and use it again when you wish.

Nature is ever new to the observant eye.

Look upon nature and you will ever find new ideas and suggestions. When you have found a new idea or suggestion, make a record of it in your sketch book, so that the details of the leaf or flower that you admire today may not become blurred or lost tomorrow.

"Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labor wears."—Franklin.

In my younger days I started a file arranged in series that I lettered A to Z. Each series bore a caption describing the nature of the designs or articles contained therein. Under "A," for example, I collected all the articles on art that I judged worth while. Under "B," all designs or ideas on brass etching, repousse, hammered, etc. I have since added ideas and designs on batik. Under "C," general designs for copper etching, candlesticks, etc. Under "D," general designs for decal-

comanias. Under "E," designs suited for enameling. Under "F," furniture designs and cuts. All through my file designs or valuable data were classified ready for reference. To this day I have preserved that file and find it invaluable in matters pertaining to art and designing. The number of designs that may be collected in newspapers, magazines, catalogs, etc., is surprising. A few weeks of collecting will afford the nucleus of a reference library of untold wealth.

The Laying of a Design

The simple drawing of an object may be used for a decoration but it is not decorative in the ordinary sense of the term. The drawing itself is only one part of the whole.

A decorative scheme is practically always geometrical in shape. Therefore, geometrical figures should be sought, as bringing the most pleasing results.

I will lay stress upon the careful construction of the primary drawing; that is, on the drawing which contains only simple outlines of your design, for on the construction of this primary drawing depends the success or failure of any design. This is the framework itself — your idea or dream set down crudely on paper. It is the groundwork or foundation, and it must be in accordance with the laws of artistic construction, or your finished work will be out of tune. The planning and drawing of the

original design requires careful study. Too much thought cannot be given it, and a carefully planned design will save much labor at the end.

In order that your design may fill just the space you want it to, it will be well to plot out with a rule or compass the space to be filled, and then sketch in roughly the main features of the design.

The chief technical point to be considered is contrast. (See Glossary for description of the term "contrast.") Next in importance comes the covering power of the surface. By the covering power of the surface I mean the size of the design itself, as applied to the surface to cover, attention being given to margins and to the selection of an appropriate design, as to lightness or boldness, as the case may be. For example, if an object is light in its construction, it will call for a light design and the use of

light tones. If the article is heavy, it will call for a design in darker tones and boldly treated. These must be carefully studied and well planned, according to the laws of composition, balance, rhythm, and color values.

The geometrical skeleton of the design to draw must be worked lightly in pencil, to allow erasing of the points we wish to eliminate.

Excellence will cost you something. You must make some sacrifice for it. You must keep yourself alert, constantly trying to better your best. It would be much easier to slide along with sloppy, superficial work. But this is not what you want. You want success, achievement. Therefore, I say to you, never do less than your best.

It will not be long until the idea of originating will come to you. There is a fascination that comes with creative work, and it is then that you will derive the highest pleasure from your work. This or that design you make to suit the color scheme after your own idea, will be an incentive in the matter of creative work.

Elsewhere in this course I have devoted some lessons to the decoration of furniture, in which I have given suggestions and color combinations that may be followed, but I rely on the knowledge and color sense you have acquired to guide you in this fascinating work of creating. If you wish to you may send me sketches of your own that I will study and return to you with suggestions that will help you.

"Idleness is the sepulchre of the living man."

Plate 1: Designs to Fill Given Spaces

Figure 1 is a design, triangular in shape, that will fit a corner or triangle in the position shown. The motif itself is plain in lines. The graceful sweep of the green leaves, the pleasing contours of the orange flower, a white border and a background of black will be "just enough" to fill this triangular shape.

Figure 2 is another design in silhouette of triangular shape treated in a realistic manner. The background should receive a foundation coat of violet enamel. When thoroughly dry, the motif may be traced and painted according to color numbers. You will note the composition, balance and color values introduced in this design.

Figure 3 is a conventional design of a circle within a square. You should have no difficulty in filling the different forms that enter in its composition.

Figure 4 is a design to fit a rectangular shape. The beauty of the motif lies in its simplicity and graceful sweeps.

Figure 5 introduces a motif to fill a half circle built on symmetry. This time I have selected a spray of bittersweet as a decorative scheme.

After the enamel has dried, do not forget to add the black outlines to this plate.

"A profound conviction raises a man above a feeling of ridicule."—J. Stuart Hill.

Plate 2: Candy Box

The circle will furnish us with a shape that will lend itself to all sorts of happy

decorations. However, simple rules of composition and balance must be observed

in order to obtain the best results. I have introduced a morning glory. This will furnish a gay color note amongst the green leaves and relieve the severity of a black

background. The outer circle of white or ivory will make a pleasing border and echo the touch of bright color in the center.

It is not necessary to outline this plate.

Plate 3: Mail Box

Plate 3 is devoted to the design of a colonial mail box. Enamel is the logical medium to use on an article which must brave sunshine and rain, for good enamel is water and light proof. You must be sure, of course, that the enamel is applied thickly enough to fill all pores in the wood and cover the surface in its entirety.

The shape of the box itself is simple of contour and the decoration simple in design. Since the foundation color should be chosen for cleanliness and attractiveness, I do not know of any better color to suggest

than a pure white. The lid of the pocket painted in green will break the monotony and somewhat too severe all white background and lend a pleasing touch of color to this useful addition to the entrance door of milady's nest.

The design on the front of the box with its flowers in bright colors and green leaves to echo its green lid will give it just enough snap to relieve its plainness and perhaps severe contours.

Indicate the lines and markings of this plate with fine black lines of enamel or India ink.

Plate 4: Tray or Box Lid

Plate 4 is a design of a bird treated in a conventional manner, showing the beautiful result obtained from the right selection of colors.

You will trace this design onto practice board and color each and every form according to the numbers given on the original plate. You will use enamel for this and all of the following plates unless otherwise stated in the course of these lessons.

When the enamels are thoroughly dry you will outline each form with a line of black using your smallest brush and black enamel, or a pen point and black India ink. This will furnish a distinct contour to all of these forms. A background of black will then be painted not only to enhance, but also to lend effectiveness and strength to the unusual design. If you have light carbon paper with which to trace on the design you may put in the background first.

By so doing you will find it easier to secure a smooth effect. Be sure, however, to apply the enamel on the designs thickly enough so that the dark background won't show through. Bear in mind that two coats of rather thin enamel will give a much better effect than one of thick, but the second coat must not be applied till the first is thoroughly dry. Never touch up small places on a design. If a little space needs an additional coat of enamel, go over the entire design.

When you start to decorate actual novelties, and are working on large surfaces you will want larger brushes than those you use for practice work. A larger brush will require larger cans of enamel—cans with wide openings at the top.

Now you are prepared to undertake the painting of somewhat more intricate designs. The training you have acquired will

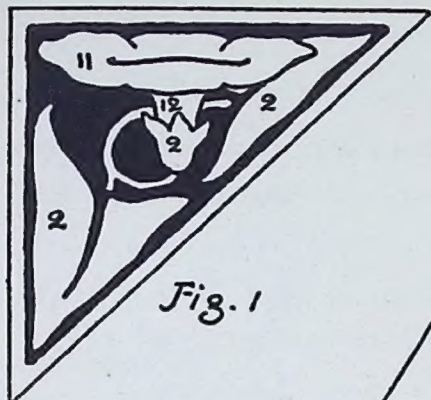
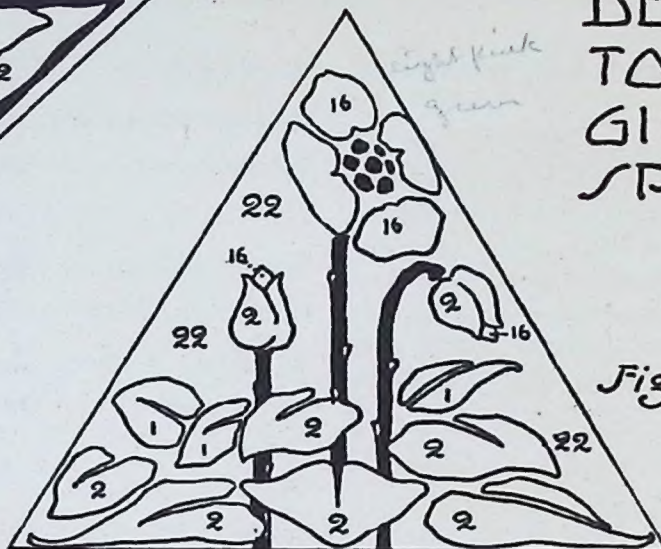


Fig. 1



DESIGNS
TO FILL
GIVEN
SPACES.

Fig. 2

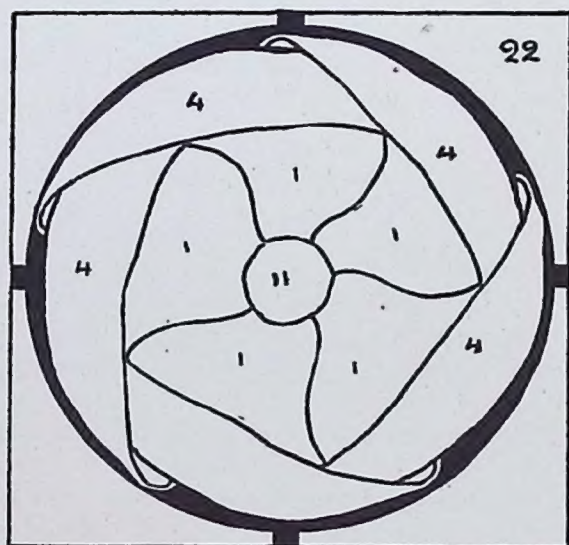


Fig. 3



Fig. 4

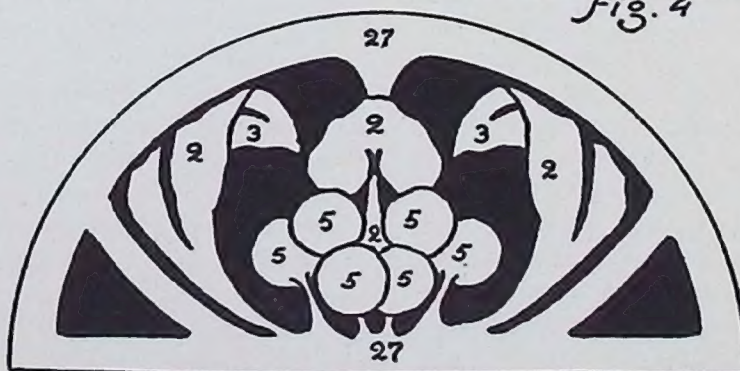


Fig. 5

Lesson 7 ©

Pl. 1

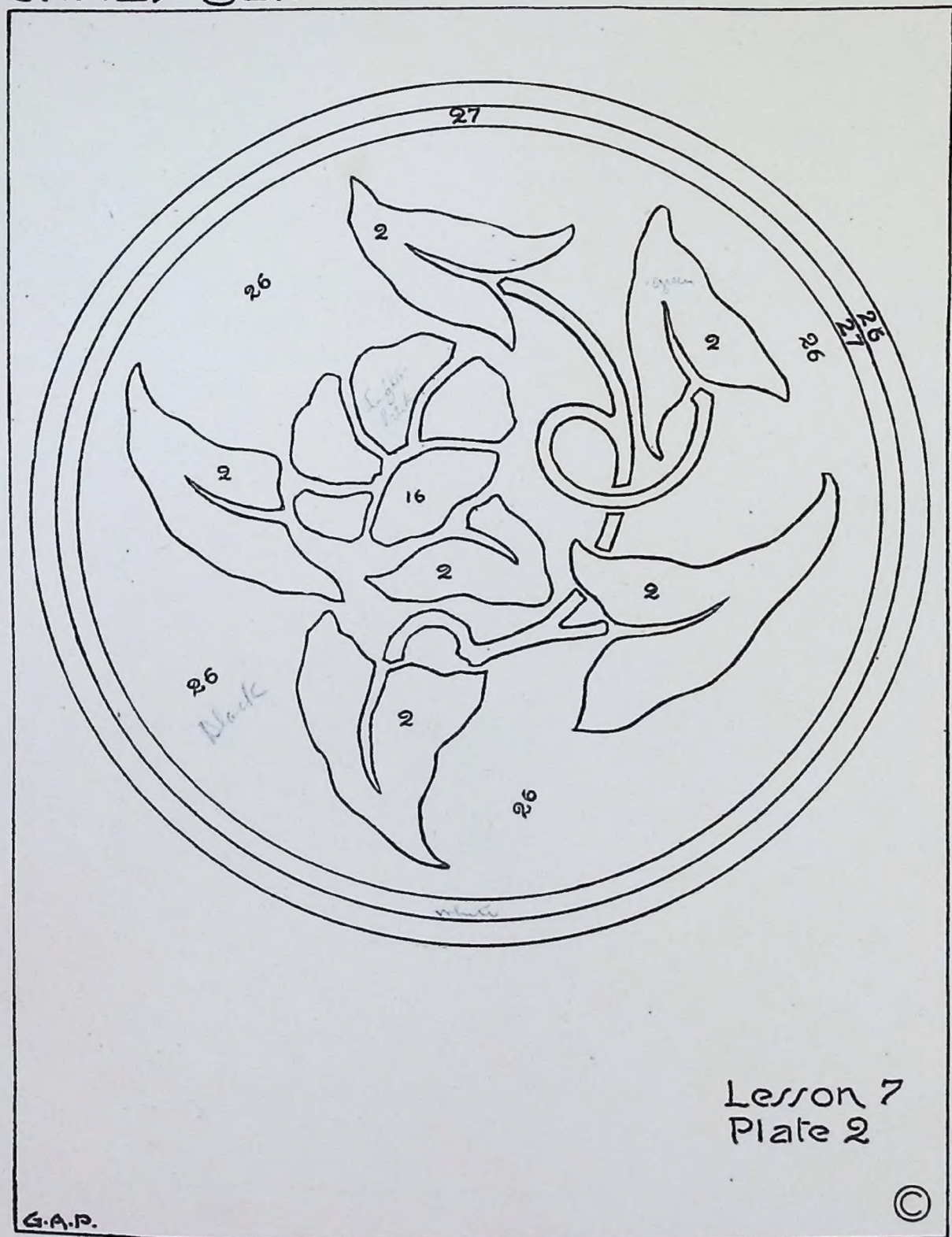
be used as ground-work in the application of naturalistic forms.

When you have finished these plates satisfactorily, you will have progressed far enough to decorate any articles similiar to those listed below. I will suggest that you order the following assortment, that you may go into business without any further delay. All the articles listed in this suggested order are simple in their decoration, and will be within your power of accomplishment.

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Candlesticks | Wooden Salad Sets |
| Colonial Book Rack | Black Cat Match Box |
| Watch Stand | Butterfly Book Ends |
| Shoe Trees | Bridge Slate |
| Cigarette Case | Nail File |
| Oval Bread Board | Card Case |
| Telephone Memo | Jardiniere |
| Mail Boxes | Metal Castings |

Gabriel André Petit.

CANDY-BOX

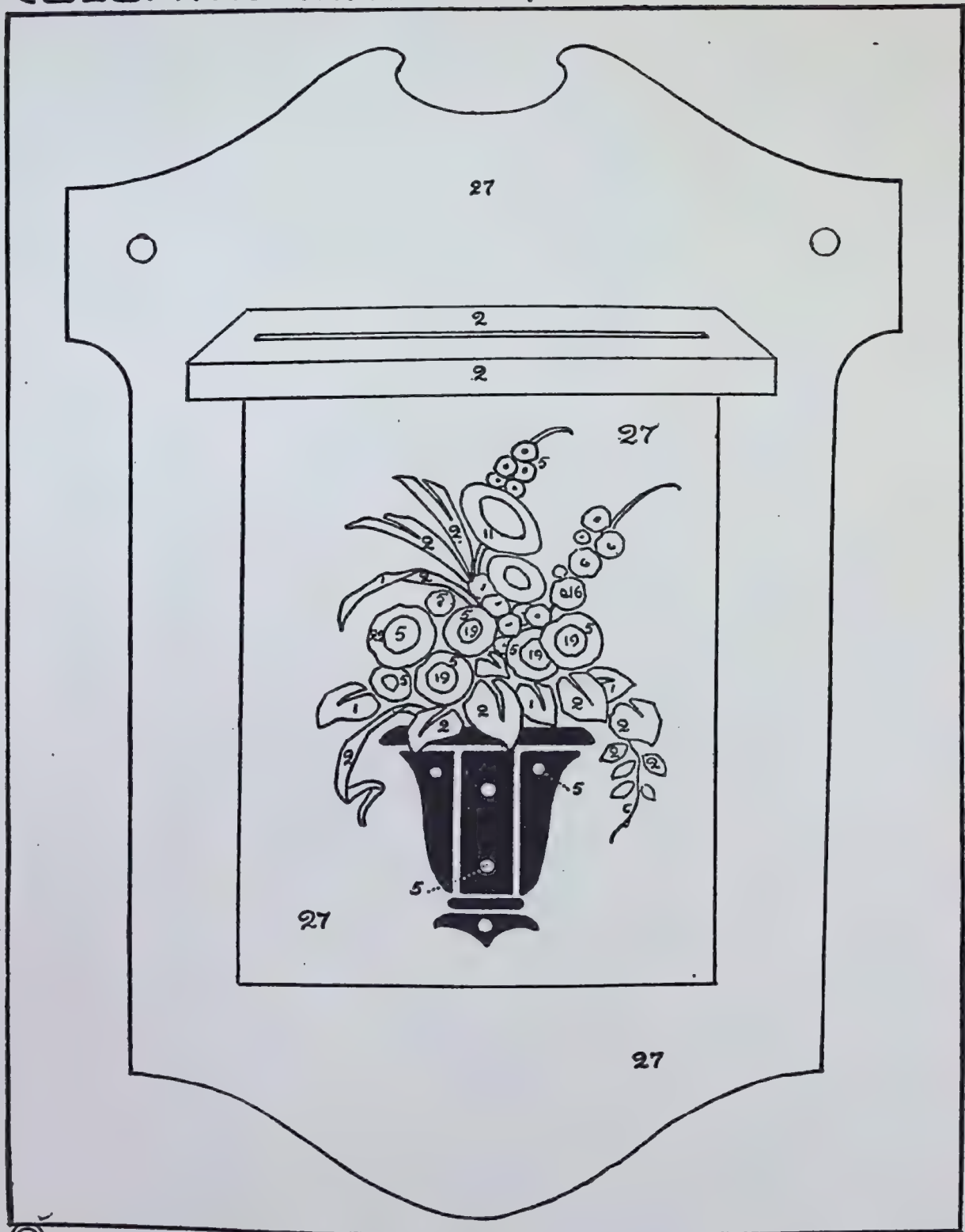


Lesson 7
Plate 2

G.A.P.



COLONIAL MAIL-BOX.



Lesson 7. Plate 3

The MIXING of COLORS



Lesson 7. Plate 4



10-29